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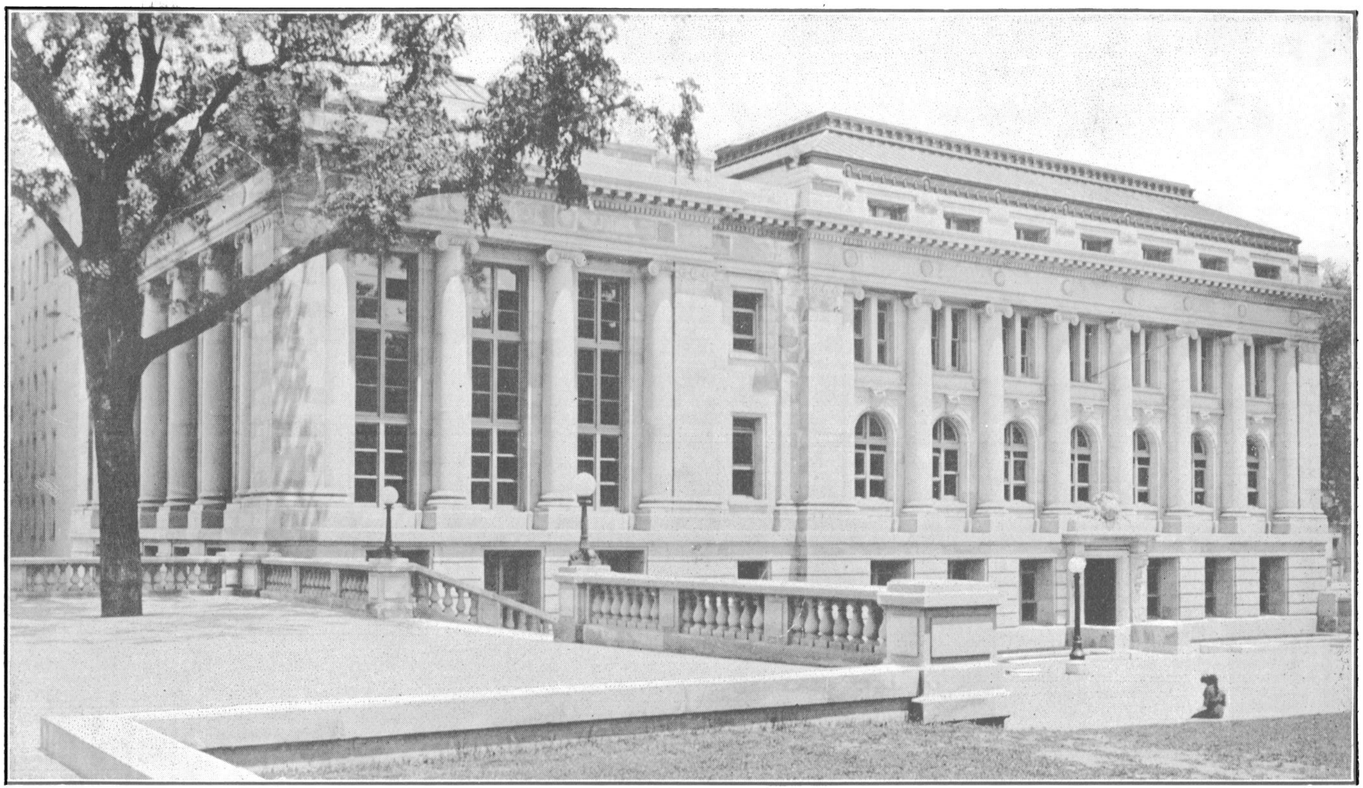


SOUTH FRONT OF THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY'S BUILDING.

Shows the main entrance and the relation between the main building and the stack house containing the library.

BULLETIN

OF THE

AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Vol. XLIII **1911** **No. 7**

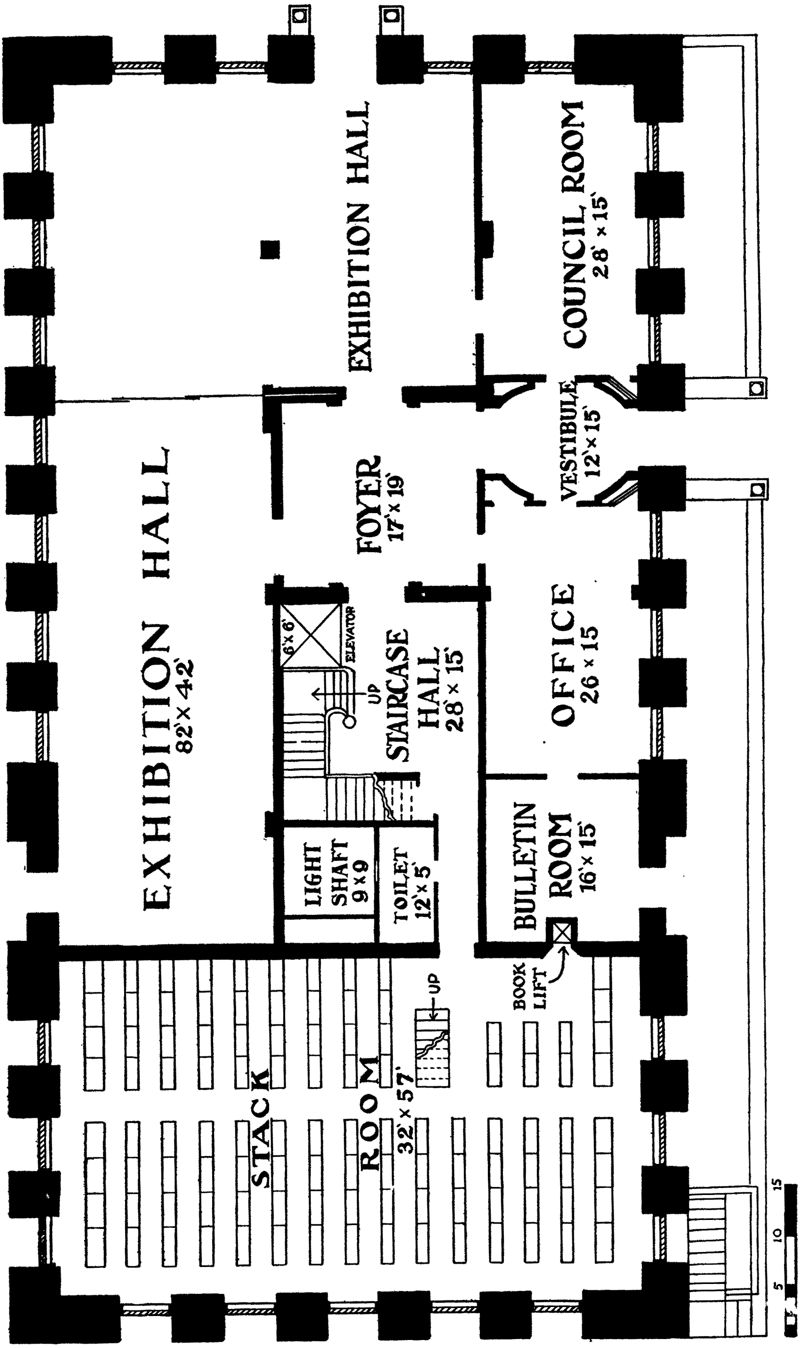
THE NEW HOME OF THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

The working staff of the Society was installed in its new building, Broadway at 156th Street, on Monday, May 15. The Society's collections had been in course of removal for about a month.

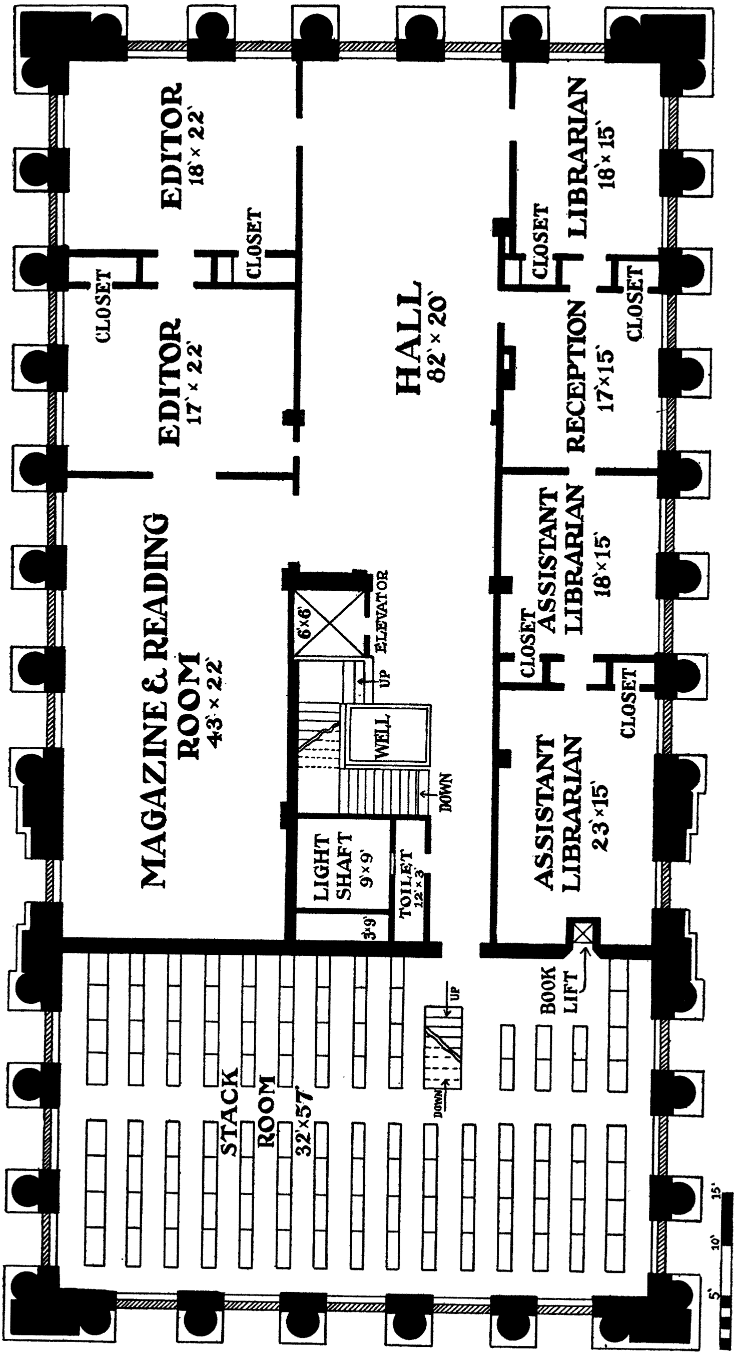
In view of the wide interest which our members and geographers generally have expressed in the erection of this beautiful and commodious structure, a few illustrations are given here of its exterior, with plans of all the floors of the main building excepting the basement and of four of the six stack floors; together with a brief description of some of the more important features of the building.

As the *Bulletin* has already mentioned, the building occupies a part of the old-time Audubon Park. To the west of it are the fine buildings of the Hispanic Society of America, The American Numismatic and Archæological Society and the Spanish Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Just beyond is Riverside Drive, the Hudson River and the wall of the Palisades in the background. In an overcrowded city no more ideal spot could be found for a center of scientific activity than on this beautiful plateau.

The building has a frontage of sixty-five feet on Broadway and 125 feet on 156th Street. The main entrance is on the south side, reached from Broadway through a wide court. Built entirely of Indiana limestone, the structure is in the style of the Italian Renaissance, conforming in architectural design with the other buildings on the grounds. It has four stories and a basement, the latter extending under the entire building, and affording large space for the storage of publications, map-plates and supplies, the boiler-room, heating plant, work-shop, rooms for the caretaker, etc.



FIRST STORY. THE OFFICE FLOOR.



SECOND STORY. EDITORIAL AND LIBRARY STAFF.

The name of the Society is chiseled on the Broadway front of the building. On the three other sides are twenty-five spaces for the names of distinguished explorers and geographers. Thus far twenty-three names have been cut into the stone, leaving two spaces still unassigned. The names are:

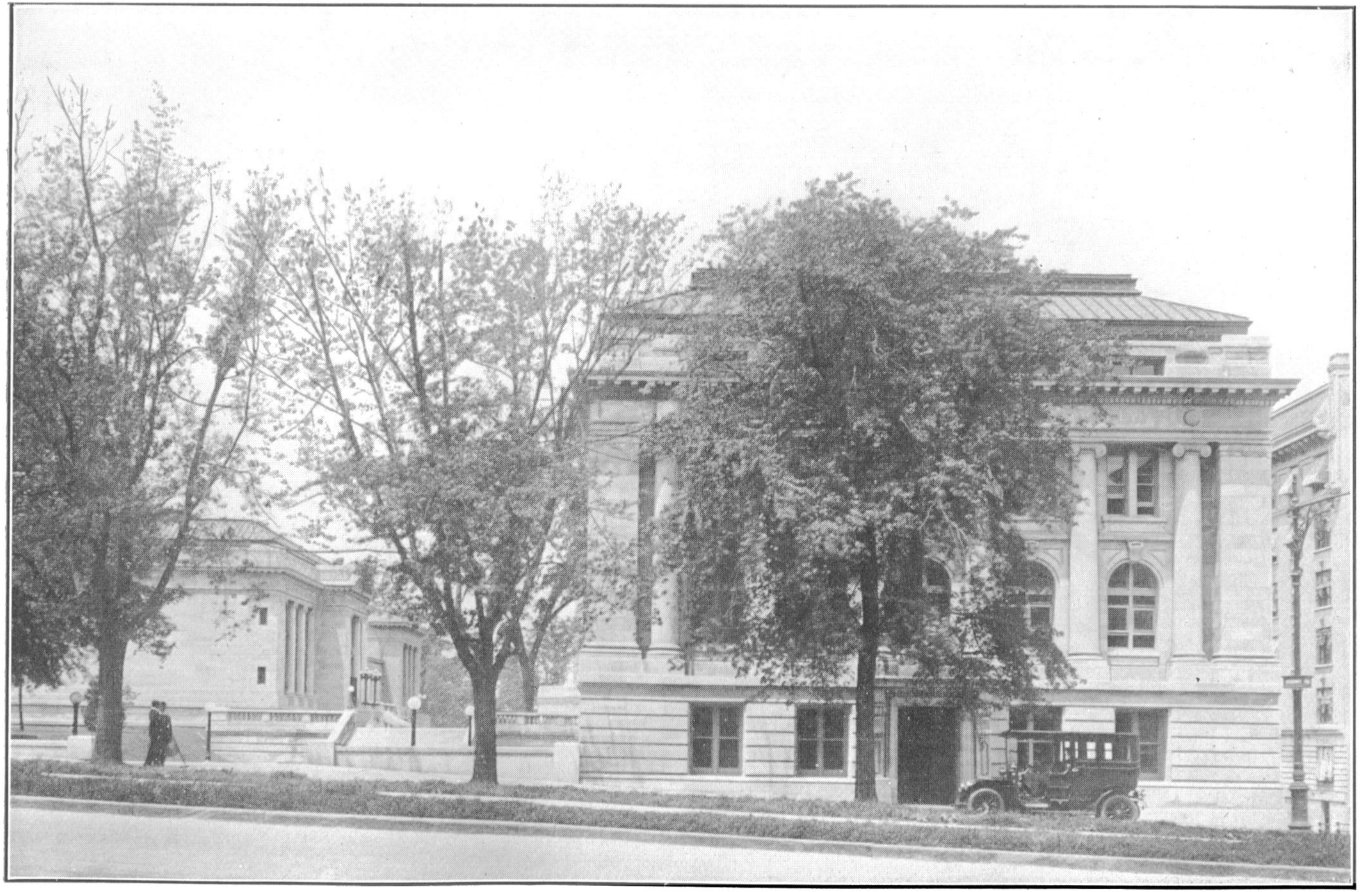
South
Strabo
Ptolemy
Marco Polo
Columbus
Magellan
Da Gama
Humboldt
Dias
Cabot
Davis

North
Hudson
La Salle
Mercator
Cartier
Balboa
Baffin
Coronado
Drake
Ritter
De Soto

West
Champlain
Vespucius
Livingstone
(two spaces
unassigned)

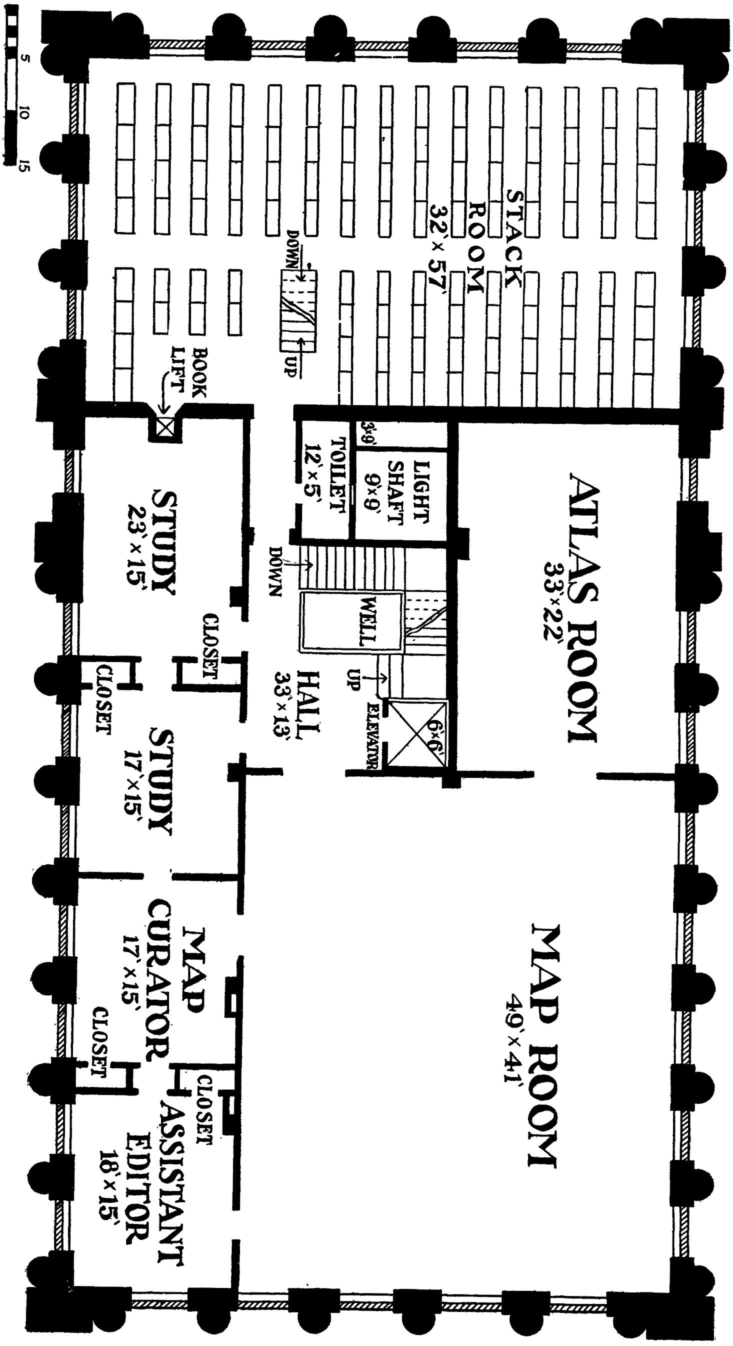
The entire western part of the building is given to the six stack floors, which have a storage capacity about five times as large as that of our former accommodations. Between the stack floors and the main building is a fire wall of brick twenty inches thick. The metal doors through which the stack floors are reached from the main building are supplied with combination locks. The floors on which the book stacks stand are of plate glass, the stacks are of cast iron with silver finish, and the shelves of corrugated steel. No wood enters into any part of the construction. All the book shelves are vertically movable at inch intervals. The first, third and fifth stack floors are connected by the metal doorways with the office, editorial and map floors respectively, of the main building. The second, fourth and sixth stack floors are mezzanine floors or *entresols,* which have connection with the floors of the main building by the stairways that lead from the bottom to the top of the stack floors. Near the book-lift doors are electric buttons for turning on the light in any of the stack floor corridors; and local buttons are in each narrow passage between the stacks for lighting the small section of shelves to be consulted. On bright days there is little need for electrical illumination, as the skylights, and windows on three sides, supply all the light required.

A feature of much convenience in the main building is the large amount of book shelving and the number of drawers and enclosed shelves with drop doors in all the work rooms. In the two editorial rooms on the second floor, for example, there are 293 linear feet of book shelves; and in the two large closets opening from these rooms and in the passageway between them are twenty-four enclosed shelves and six drawers. The book shelves in the various work-rooms give



THE BROADWAY FRONT.

Shows the situation of the building relative to the buildings of the Hispanic and Numismatic Societies.



THIRD STORY. MAP FLOOR.

space for practically all the reference books in the library. The abundance of enclosed shelves keep in classified order and protected from dust, the large variety of material required in the regular work of the house. Some of these enclosed shelves in the map department are long enough to hold wall maps on rollers till they are catalogued and ready to be placed in the collections.

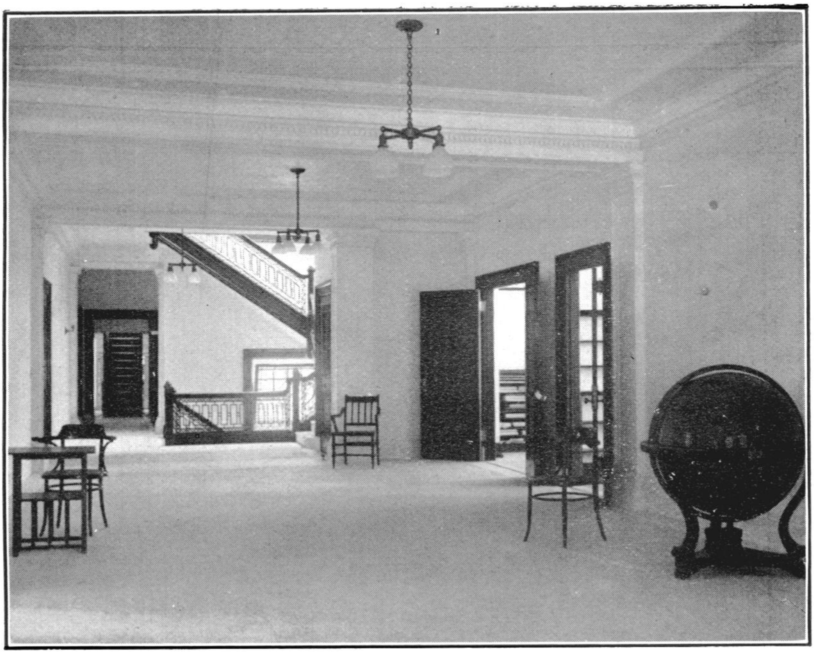
The large metal book-lift, operated by electricity, connects the basement with each of the six stack floors, and also with the first, second and third floors of the main building. If the lift is to be moved to any one of these floors, the appropriate button is pressed and the lift stops at the floor designated; and not till it stops can the doors opening into the lift be opened. If the buttons on two or more floors are simultaneously pressed, the lift does not move.

Terrazzo, mixed cement and small marble fragments, three inches thick, practically indestructible and almost noiseless, is the substance of which the floors are composed throughout the main building, excepting that the floor of the fourth story is cement alone and, in the vestibule and foyer, terrazzo is used in tasteful designs, with Norwegian and Tennessee marble. The stairways are of Norwegian marble and the floor of the main hall, second story, is bordered with the same material. All the window frames, shelving, etc., on the four floors of the main building are of quartered oak. A house telephone connects all the work-rooms and distance telephones are installed on the first and second floors.

The normal heat required in all the rooms and halls is fixed at 72° F. When the heating plant is in use, if the temperature rises above or falls below the standard in any room or hallway, the fact is automatically reported to the heat regulating appliance in the basement, and more heat, or less, is automatically directed to the room whose temperature has varied from the standard.

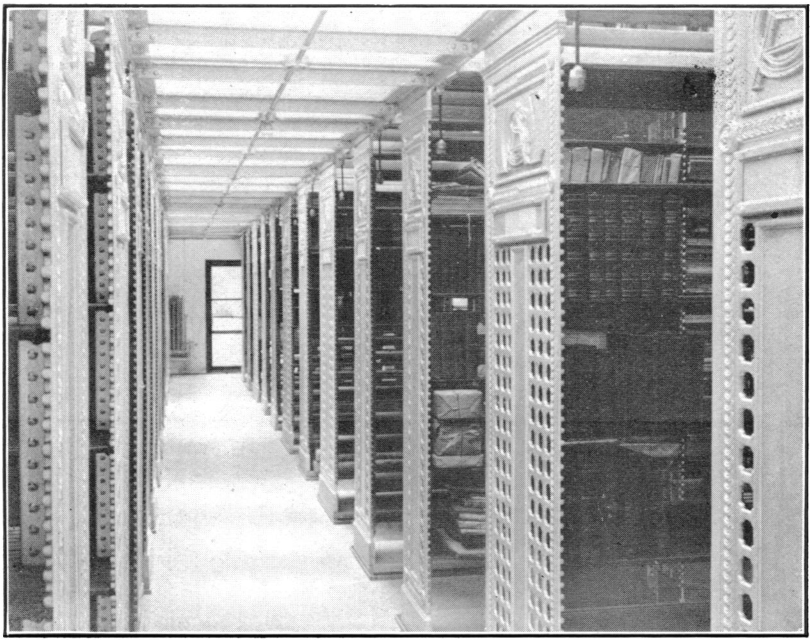
The accompanying plans show clearly the arrangement of the floors, and little need be added by way of explanation. The doors dividing the exhibition hall into two parts (1st floor) all run into the slit indicated on the plan by a white line, disappearing entirely from view, and the whole finely lighted space will serve well for exhibitions of maps and other geographical material. Closing these partition doors, the narrow part of the hall will provide about 200 sittings, and be well adapted for such scientific lectures as do not require large halls.

The rooms for the editorial and library force—second story—as now assigned and marked on the plates, may be changed to serve the convenience of the work, but in the main the present arrangement



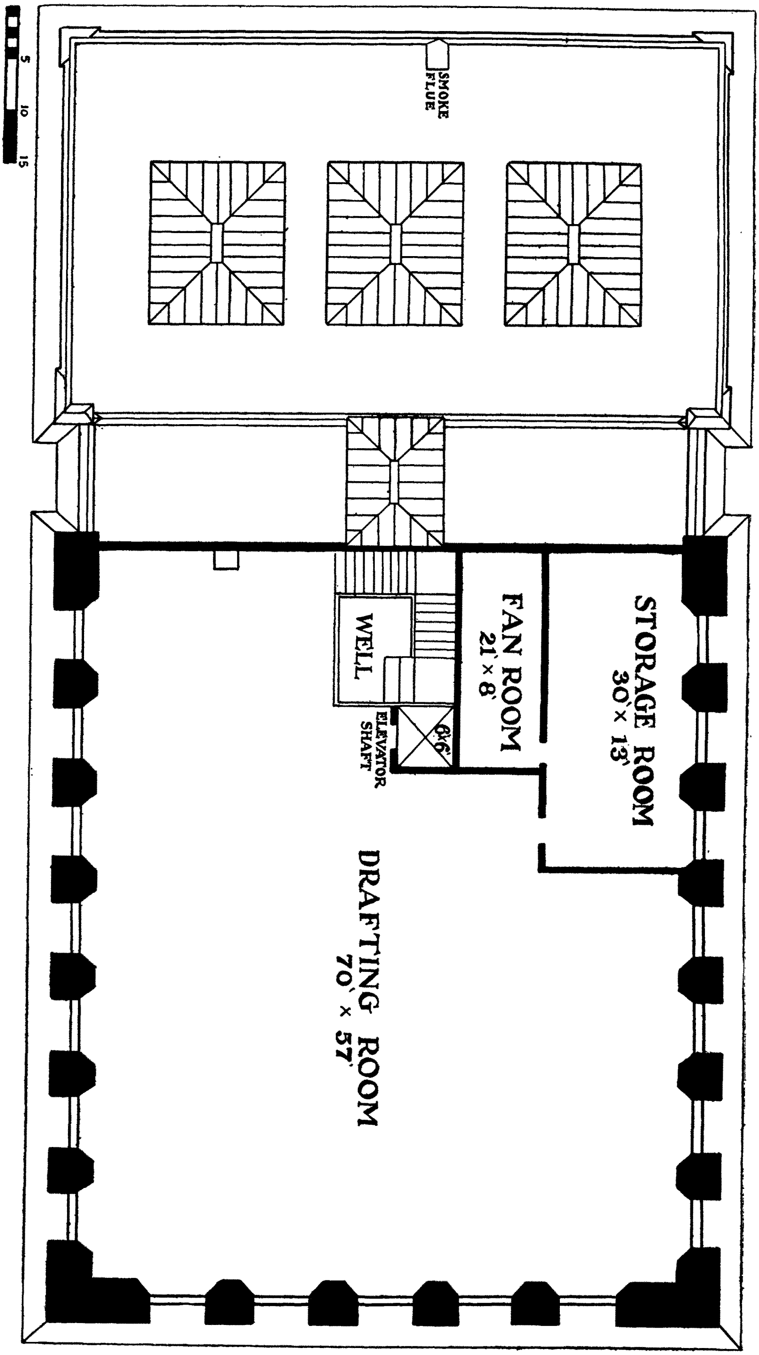
MAIN HALL.

In its unfurnished state. The front of the hall does not appear in this view. The open doors give glimpses of one of the stack rooms (in the rear) and of the magazine and reading room on the right. The stairway connects all the floors. The elevator door is in front of the stairway.



A STACK ROOM.

Shows one of the corridors and the book-stacks bordering it.



FOURTH STORY. DRAFTING FLOOR.

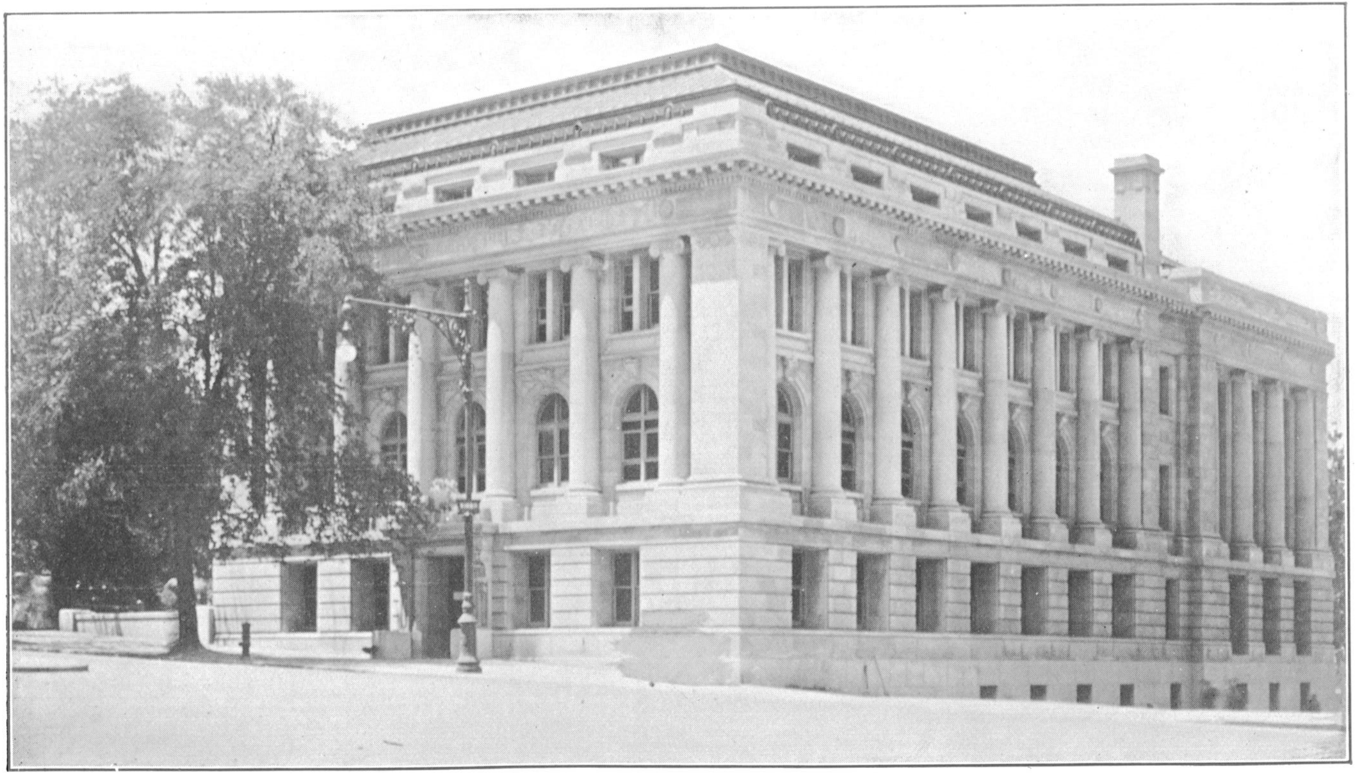
will doubtless be preserved. The magazine and reading room is a perfectly lighted apartment, with ample room to lay out the latest issues of all our exchanges from foreign societies, and with adequate and comfortable accommodations for readers. The current publications are also within easy reach of the editorial and library rooms. The cataloguers occupy the large room adjoining the book-lift.

The map floor, occupying the third story, has about seven times the storage capacity for maps and atlases hitherto provided. Rows of dust-proof cases extending across the map room contain maps in sheets. The collection of historical and other atlases is in the atlas room. Atlases most needed in the daily work of the Society are in magazine and reading room on shelves above which the current publications are arranged; a few also are in the work-rooms.

The drafting floor, fourth story, with skylight roof above it, could probably not be improved for map-drawing purposes. It offers every advantage for the development of a superior map-drafting department. The fan room is the lungs of the complete ventilating system, which is designed to supply pure air at all times to every part of the building. The space at the left of the light shaft, in three of the plans, is reserved for the ventilation pipes connecting with the fan room.

It is unnecessary here to speak in any detail of the handsome and tasteful fittings and finish of the interior. The house is lighted by electricity, which also runs the passenger elevator. A month's occupancy has more than confirmed all expectations as to the convenience, comfort and complete adequacy of this beautiful structure for the purposes and needs of a geographical society. The work-rooms are large, ceilings high, ventilation perfect, light abundant, and the atmosphere of every room and floor is cheerful and inviting. The basement is so light that artificial illumination there will seldom be needed.

In brief, this great enlargement of the facilities of the Society was planned and has been carried out on a scale that lavishly provides for the growth of our collections and of the Society's work for generations to come.



Broadway and 156th Street Fronts.